



Jan Gregor, of Astoria, stands outside the Warrenton Community Center during a DEQ meeting about LNG Tuesday.



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian
A schematic of the proposed LNG terminal is seen behind Corps Regulatory Project Manager Richard Chong as he speaks during the DEQ's meeting about Oregon LNG Tuesday.

Protest: LNG project would construct a pipeline through multiple counties

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were not serious about taking your information and trying to answer questions."

No easement update

With the Army Corps in attendance, the public hoped to hear an update on a lawsuit filed in August by Oregon LNG for access to an easement over the proposed terminal site, controlled by the Corps since 1957. The Corps uses the land for disposing dredge spoils.

Last month, Columbia Riverkeepers discovered the court

filings for the easement issue that went undetected since August.

The Corps filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit in November.

Richard Chong, project manager for the Corps, told the crowd the Corps cannot comment on any litigation. Later, the Corps officials hinted at the importance of real estate issues when considering a permit. A permit will not be issued without real estate considerations, they said.

Along with possibly not having rights to the federally owned land, Oregon LNG was

recently denied a permit at the county level.

The Oregon Court of Appeals ruled last month in favor of Clatsop County, upholding its decision to deny a permit for the pipeline to the terminal.

Oregon LNG challenged the county's decision Oct. 18, 2013, to deny the permit on the grounds of bias, but the Court of Appeals ultimately sided with the county.

Oregon LNG continues to push forward by seeking permits from the agencies at the meeting Tuesday under the Clean Water Act and the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Its project would construct a terminal on the Skipanon Peninsula and an 87-mile pipeline in Clatsop, Tillamook and Columbia counties. The project started as import only in 2004, but the scope changed in 2012 to an import/export project, requiring more permitting.

At the meeting, the agencies said they plan to review the results of FERC's draft environmental statement while working independently on their own permitting processes.

Not firm timelines have been set.

DEQ scheduled another public meeting from 6 p.m. to



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More than 35 people gathered outside of the Warrenton Community Center to protest the LNG process before the DEQ's public meeting about Oregon LNG Tuesday.

8 p.m. Thursday in Vernonia, where locals have concerns about impacts of the pipeline.

All levels of permitting from the county to the federal government are important to the pro-

cess, Concini told the crowd. "It's more of a sequence as opposed to one gets more weight. Hopefully everything will get the same amount of weight," Concini said.

Bridge Vista: Public feedback has called for 'extremely limited development'

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Commission in March.

The city hopes to complete the Bridge Vista phase, which runs from the Port of Astoria to Second Street, by June.

The Riverfront Vision Plan presumes there will be new development along and over the Columbia River in the Bridge Vista blueprint, but much of the public feedback so far has been strongly against encouraging development projects that might obstruct views or spoil the region's distinct character.

"I think we've found a balanced compromise that allows us to go forward and the community to continue to develop," said Dave Pearson, the deputy director of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, who was chosen Tuesday night as the new president of the Planning Commission, replacing Zetty Nemlowill, who was elected to the City Council.

"We've preserved the views. We keep what's important for the riverfront and the pedestrians."

Getting closer

Commissioners have approached consensus on limiting development over the river near the bridge and west of Second Street near the Ship Inn and the old White Star Cannery boiler. Building heights would be restricted to the top of the riverbank in these areas. In other sections, building heights over the river

could be 35 feet up from the riverbank.

Building width would be limited to 150 feet, and spacing between buildings would be no closer than 40 feet to preserve view corridors.

On shore, building heights would be up to 35 feet, or 45 feet with setbacks to help protect views.

Commissioners are also supportive of a new pedestrian-friendly zone near the bridge that could include retail, hotels and commercial projects but would exclude auto-dependent uses, like gas stations, along with drive-through facilities and manufacturing.

Off-street parking requirements would likely be reduced in the pedestrian-friendly zone.

Commissioners are interested in an expanded commercial zone along the river with a broader range of retail, commercial and residential options but restrictions on automotive sales or services and light manufacturing.

Development outcry

While Matt Hastie, the city's planning consultant, and others have stressed that the land-use changes would impose development restrictions that do not exist today, the public reaction — like it was during the Civic Greenway phase of the four-leg Riverfront Vision Plan — has been mostly critical.

City Councilor Drew Herzig questioned whether

the Planning Commission had heard the public outcry against development at a town hall meeting on Bridge Vista in Uniontown earlier this month.

He said the preponderance of the public feedback has called for "extremely limited development."

David Carter, who said he and his wife bought a home on Franklin Avenue last spring, told the commission he is concerned his spectacular views of the river might be obstructed.

"My primary concern is that I paid a premium and I feel like I'm going to lose that value of my property by what's occurring here," he said.

Commissioner McLaren Innes said she was looking for a middle ground between "development versus no development."

"We are hearing from, so often now, groups of people who'd want no development," she said. "And yet I don't know how to reconcile that with all the people that told us vis-a-vis the Riverfront Vision Plan that it should be balanced."

Commissioner Kent Eason said views change at different spots along the river and the city.

"And buildings are part of the view," he said. "If you don't want any buildings to look at, then go get an ocean view. But along the river, along a town, it may have buildings."

Commissioner Sean Fitzpatrick said he hoped Bridge Vista would not be as contentious as the debate over the Civic Greenway, which covered land use along the river from 16th Street to 41st Street.

"Our job is to reduce what

is currently allowed and make it palatable, make it fit into this document here," he said of the Riverfront Vision Plan. "So we're not a group up here proposing something and trying to ruin people's views."

"And I hope that all of the dialogue from the public from

here on, that they can understand that everybody here loves the riverfront. We all love the views. We love this town.

"And we appreciate the character that it has and we have no intention of trying to destroy that."



Daily Astorian file

The Astoria Planning Commission is discussing proposals to change zoning in a thin strip of Uniontown waterfront area north of Marine Drive, south of the Astoria Riverfront Trolley line and between the Dunes Motel and the Holiday Inn. The land lies within the Bridge Vista area, part of the Astoria Riverfront Vision Plan.

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